

## ABSTRACT

This invention is of a hybrid organoclay that consists of an organic chemical/phyllosilicate clay intercalate that has been ion-exchanged with quaternary ammonium compounds. Since this hybrid organoclay is hydrophobic, it can be washed in water to remove reaction salts and excess water soluble or water dispersible polymers to give a clean product via inexpensive means such as filtration. This allows a better dispersing composition to be prepared without the difficulties of isolation presented by prior art which uses energy intensive means to remove the bulk of the water from the final product and cannot be easily washed.

In one aspect, the present invention provides a solid clay/chemical composition that comprises: (a) one or more smectite clays, (b) a quaternary ammonium compound which reacts via an ion exchange mechanism with the smectite clay, and (c) one or more non-anionic organic materials that intercalate with the clay.

The invention is useful both as an ingredient to form nanocomposites and as a rheological additive.